

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 610

By Norris

A RESOLUTION to recognize and celebrate National Agriculture Day on March 20, 2006, and National Agriculture Week from March 19-25, 2006.

WHEREAS, American agriculture provides almost everything we eat, use, and wear on a daily basis, but too few people truly understand and appreciate this massive contribution; and

WHEREAS, American agriculture builds on centuries of progress by constantly seeking advances in science, research, technology, production, and marketing to meet the demands of changing consumer needs and complex world markets; and

WHEREAS, each American farmer feeds more than 129 people, a dramatic increase from the 25-person average of the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, quite simply, American agriculture is doing more, and doing it better, and as the world population soars, there will be an even greater demand for food and fiber produced in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in addition to helping feed the world, American agriculture fuels our nation's economy and is the largest positive contributor to our nation's net trade balance; and

WHEREAS, agriculture provides 24 million jobs throughout the farm and food industry, and the meticulous stewardship of America's farmers and ranchers ensures a sustainable resource base for future generations; and

WHEREAS, accounting for approximately twenty percent (20%) of America's total agricultural production, agricultural exports inject nearly \$133 billion into the national economy and support jobs for 750,000 Americans; and

WHEREAS, agriculture is Tennessee's largest industry, generating \$2.2 billion annually in gross income; and

WHEREAS, farming dominates Tennessee's beautiful landscape, with 87,000 farms producing and selling crops and livestock; nearly half (44%) of Tennessee's land area, or 11.9 million acres, is in farmland; and

WHEREAS, agriculture earns Tennessee \$20 billion annually and provides more than 200,000 jobs; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee agricultural marketplace is truly global in nature, as exports of raw agricultural products totaled almost \$650 million in 2003; and

WHEREAS, each year on the first day of spring, agricultural producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies, and countless other citizens join together to recognize the many contributions of agriculture to American society and its economy through the observance of National Agriculture Day (National Ag Day); and

WHEREAS, National Ag Day recognizes and celebrates the abundance provided by American agriculture and the important role it plays in our everyday lives, while expressing our collective appreciation as a nation to America's farmers and agriculture industry; and

WHEREAS, this year, National Ag Day is celebrated on March 20, 2006, as part of the larger National Agriculture Week observance from March 19-25, 2006; and

WHEREAS, hosted by the Agriculture Council of America, the National Ag Day program encourages every American to understand how food and fiber products are produced, to value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy, and to appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant, and affordable products; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to raise public awareness, Agricenter International is sponsoring the 2006 Ag Day Poster Contest, which runs from February 1, 2006, to February 28, 2006; and

WHEREAS, Agricenter International's Ag Day Poster Contest gives students an opportunity to compete for cash prizes and exhibit their artistic talents; and

WHEREAS, Agricenter International seeks to provide education and awareness in agriculture and environmental sciences to the public through programs, such as the Ag Day Poster Contest, which promotes understanding of the importance of agriculture to our communities and our environment; and

WHEREAS, by educating the consumers of today about agriculture, National Ag Day seeks to set the stage for an understanding public of the future; and

WHEREAS, by building public awareness, National Ag Day also encourages young people to consider career opportunities in agriculture, such as the more than 21,000 students who are enrolled in high school agriculture education programs in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, each year on National Ag Day and throughout National Agriculture Week, the Agriculture Council of America and other members of the agricultural community engage tens of thousands of volunteers and organizations in grassroots efforts to educate the public about agriculture's vital role in modern-day America through various programs designed to increase agricultural literacy; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that in recognition of the important role that agriculture plays in the daily lives of Tennesseans and all Americans, and in acknowledgement of the future progress and prosperity of our nation's economy, and in advancement of a greater appreciation for farmers and ranchers across this great land, this General Assembly hereby recognizes and celebrates March 20, 2006, as National Agriculture Day, and March 19-25, 2006, as National Agriculture Week, and encourages all Tennesseans to participate in appropriate activities and programs to further the agricultural literacy goals of this worthy observance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.